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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000161

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/BSC AND WHA/AND
NSC FOR TOM SHANNON/KIM BREIER
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD DAN JOHNSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PA](#)

SUBJECT: PARAGUAYAN FM TRYING TO TURN OFF VENEZUELAN STATE
VISIT

REF: ASUNCION 00152

Classified By: Charge Kevin M. Johnson for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

1. (U) On January 28, just prior to a meeting with FM Leila Rachid on other matters, MFA Bilateral Affairs Director Ceferino Valdez advised Charge that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was going to visit Paraguay February 27-28. Valdez said that the visit was being planned in conjunction with Chavez's trip to Uruguay for the upcoming presidential inauguration.

2. (C) During the meeting that followed, Rachid reiterated President Duarte's support for Colombian President Alvaro Uribe in the Colombian-Venezuelan dispute (reftel), and told Charge that she had been in touch with the Paraguayan Embassy in Caracas to try to turn off the Chavez visit. Rachid went on to voice rather harsh criticism of Chavez, calling him "vulgar," "a thorn in the side," and "Fidel Castro's envoy in Latin America." She added that she rejects Chavez's "messianic" ambition to "lead the Latin American community." JOHNSON